Marketing Public Relations

A Marketer's Approach to Public Relations and Social Media

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Chapter 8

The Press Kit and Press Release

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Chapter Objectives

1. Explain the elements and purpose of a press kit.
2. Describe the content and purposes of backgrounders, fact sheets, and FAQs.
3. Write an effective backgrounder.
4. Write effective fact sheets and FAQs.
5. Describe the types of supporting material that can be included in a press kit and explain their importance.
6. Compare and contrast traditional versus electronic press kits.
7. Describe the different purposes of a press release.
8. Explain the major elements of a press release and how they contribute to the release's effectiveness.
9. Write an effective press release.
10. Describe a video news release, its purpose, and the controversy surrounding VNRs.

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Press Release

- Information of timely value distributed by an organization to promote its views, products, or services

- Also called a **news release**

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Press Kit

- Information compiled by organizations for the purpose of informing media outlets and other connectors about their firm, brands, products, employees, and activities

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Backgrounder

- Fact-oriented MPR document that takes the form of a narrative about a company, product, or person

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Subject File

- A file kept by a journalist or other connector containing information about subjects he is interested in covering

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Factsheet

- A list of facts designed to entice connectors to cover a firm or its products, while supplying them with information to support their coverage

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FAQs

- An MPR document of questions that a typical audience for a given connector might have related to a firm and its products, along with answers to those questions

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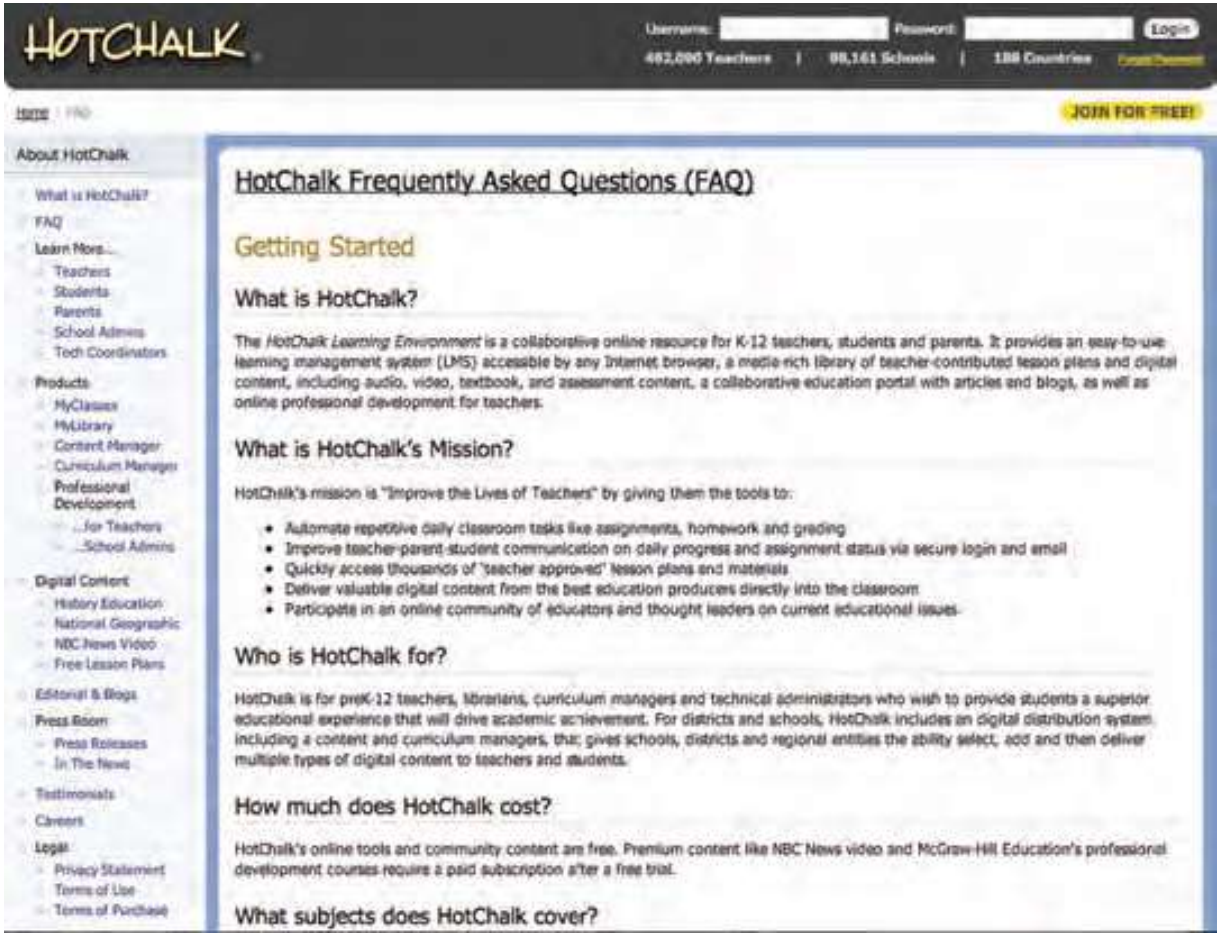
Sample FAQ sheet



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Supporting Materials

- Press Releases
- Company literature
- Executive biographies
- Photos
- Expert contacts
- Clippings

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Clipping

- Evidence of the coverage of a firm or its products by the media or other connectors

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Purpose of a press release

- An introduction to connectors
- To elicit media mentions and word-of-mouth
- To announce a new product or service
- To publicize the good deeds of a firm and its employees

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Sample press release

NVIDIA

USA – United States

DOWNLOAD DRIVERS | SHOP | PRODUCTS | TECHNOLOGIES | COMMUNITIES | COMPANY INFO | NEWS | SUPPORT

BACK

Share

Graphics Evolves Beyond Gaming With New NVIDIA Geforce GTX 200 GPUs

Revolutionary Processor Does Double Duty as the Most Advanced GPU Ever Built and a Second-Generation CUDA General Purpose Parallel Processor

For further information, contact:

Bryan Del Rizzo
NVIDIA Corporation
(408) 486-2772

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SANTA CLARA, CA—JUNE 16, 2008—Imagine instead of taking over five hours to convert a video for your iPod, it only takes 35 minutes. Imagine using your PC to simulate protein folding to help find a cure for debilitating diseases. Imagine that your PC can dramatically accelerate everyday tasks, and deliver an exciting visual experience in the process. Today that imagination becomes a reality now that the leader in visual computing technologies, NVIDIA (Nasdaq: NVDA), has introduced its new family of GeForce® GTX 200 graphics processors (GPUs)—which includes the GeForce GTX 280 and GeForce GTX 260 GPUs—taking graphics beyond gaming and gaming beyond anything that's ever been possible before on a consumer computing platform.

"The advances NVIDIA continues to make in visual computing are simply incredible, and we are excited to be one of the first companies in the world to offer the technology in the new Exhilaration Edition of the award-winning HP Blackbird 002," said Rahul Sood, chief technology officer, HP Voodoo Business Unit. "Exceptional graphics quality and performance is important to our customers, and now the GeForce GTX 200 GPUs are bringing something else into the mix. By using the GPU to enhance everyday applications such as video encoding and manipulating photos, HP Blackbird 002 is one of the most cutting-edge PC platforms ever designed."

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Reasons to create a press release

- Release of a new product or service
- Opening of a new business location or relocation of an existing one
- Announcing a special event
- Announcing new personnel or personnel changes/promotions
- Recognition of good deeds performed for the community
- Public appearances by company executives or employees
- Announcement of awards won by organization or stakeholders
- Contest announcements or results (tied in with other promotional activities)
- Announcing the creation of interorganizational partnerships
- Crisis control

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Media Alert

- A non-persuasive form of a press release intended simply to inform connectors of a particular fact

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Embargo

- A heading on a news release indicating that the news is not to be published or reported before a specific date

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Elements of a press release

1. Press release label
2. Release date statement
3. Contact information
4. Headline
5. Sub-heads
6. Body
7. The lead
8. Boilerplate
9. Conclude with # # #

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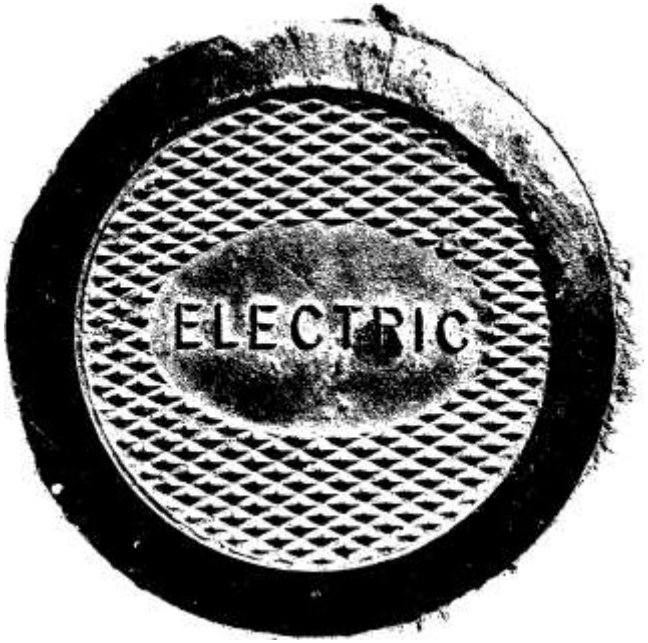
Boilerplate

- A short description of a company for editorial use



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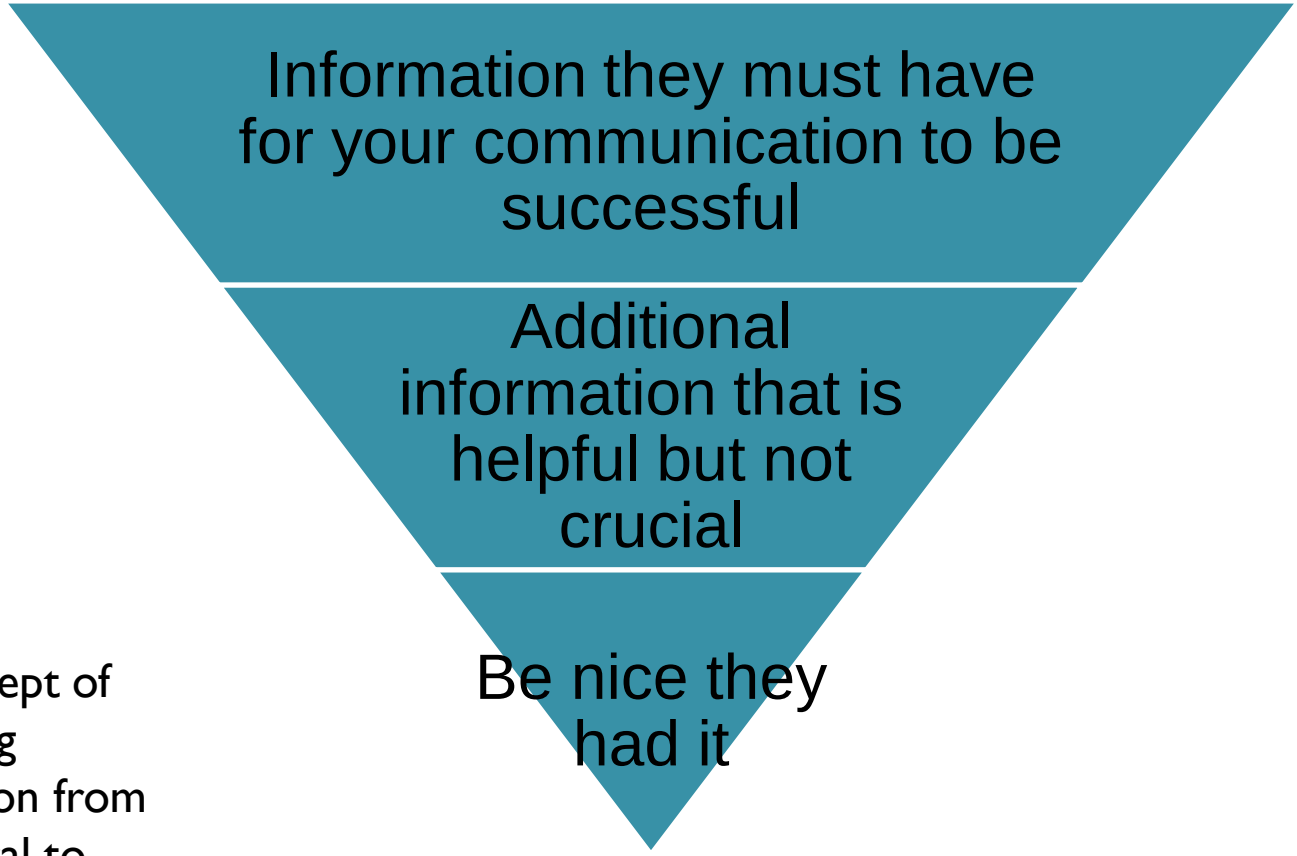
Inverted Pyramid Writing



The concept of presenting information from the general to the specific

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Press Release Writing Tips

- Illustrate
- Stick to the facts
- Pick an angle

- Use active, not passive voice
- Used mixed case letters
- Correct grammar usage
- Use a word processor

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Video News Release

- A publicity device created by a firm, which is designed to look and sound like a television news story. Marketers prepare a sixty- to ninety-second video, which can then be used by television stations as is or after further editing.

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Concept Case 8.1: Falcon's Lair

Getting the Facts Together

1. Using both this information and what you already know about The Falcon's Lair, discuss how you would format a backgrounder for the company.
2. In what order would you place these facts on a fact sheet? Is there anything you would exclude? Is there anything else you think you should add? Explain.
3. Write three questions that you feel would be appropriate to include on The Falcon's Lair's FAQs. Be sure to include answers.

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Concept Case 8.2: Falcon's Lair

Writing a Press Release

1. Discuss the pros and cons of each headline, and explain which one you feel is best.
2. Write your own headline and explain why it is better than any of the above.
3. Write a lead paragraph that supports your headline and explain why you worded it as you did.

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Reflection Questions

1. Discuss the value of the press kit to the MPR professional as well as to connectors.
2. Explain the purpose served by backgrounders, fact sheets, and FAQs.
3. Describe the format of a backgrounder and explain the "Who Cares" test.
4. Discuss the impact of the organization of the facts on a fact sheet and explain under what circumstances you would choose to use an FAQ instead.
5. What are the types of support material typically included in a press kit and what are the specific contributions of each piece?
6. Compare and contrast the benefits and limitations of electronic and paper press kits.
7. What is the primary objective of a press release and what are some reasons for creating one?
8. Describe the format of a press release and explain the purpose of each element.
9. Explain the concept of the inverted pyramid and why it is important to press release writing.
10. Discuss both the benefits and drawbacks of video news releases and explain your thoughts on how and when marketers should use them.

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Practice Portfolio

- Using one or more of the sources listed in "PR Databases and Directories," in conjunction with material supplied by individual connectors and auditing bureaus, create a comprehensive media list for your company. Briefly describe why you chose each connector.

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